

St Gregory's Catholic Science College Newsletter



Christmas 2024

From the Headteacher

It is a great honour and privilege to write this message to you because this is the first Christmas newsletter since I became the Headteacher of St Gregory's. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first term in my new role; there has been much to celebrate and this newsletter is testament to all of the excellent initiatives led by pupils and members of staff.

Once again, this summer, our pupils achieved exceptional qualifications. The School's Progress 8 score was +0.72 which means that, on average, all of our Year 11 pupils made almost three quarters of a grade more progress (in every subject) than pupils who attend a 'typical' school in England. Our Attainment 8 score was 5.8 which, again, rates the school as well above average. Overall, 34% of all GCSE results were grades 9, 8 or 7 (equivalent to the old A* or A grades).

In the sixth form, 35% of all A-level results were awarded grades A*-A which is well above the national average of 28%. 68% of A-level grades were A*-B (national average 54%) and 88% of all grades were A*-C (national average 76%). Our students who followed a vocational curriculum in the sixth form also achieved tremendous grades: 76% of results were Distinction* - Distinction and 84% of results were Distinction* - Merit. We are immensely proud of all of our students, they worked very hard and we are eternally grateful to the teachers who gave up their time so willingly on Saturdays, during school holidays, before school, during lunchtime and after school hours to support our students.

The current Year 11 students have made an excellent start to this important year and early indications suggest that they will surpass the wonderful results from this summer. The Year 11 students have had excellent attendance at school on Saturdays and have taken their mock exams very seriously. We look forward to analysing their results in January.

Our Year 7 students have settled in extremely well to life at St Gregory's. It was a pleasure to meet parents and families at the Mass in September, the Mass in October and at the parents' evening last week. It was wonderful to hear the feedback from teachers about how happy and settled our Year 7 students are and how well they are achieving in lessons.

In September, for the first time, we held information evenings for all parents so that we could explain the content of the curriculum. Information about the Spring term curriculum will soon be sent out to all families along with suggestions about how parents and carers can support their children.

All of our pupils have been getting to know our new chaplain, Fr Brendan, and I am delighted that all pupils have been given the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation during Advent. The Year 10 pupils have been celebrating the sacrament of Eucharist during tutor time and all remaining pupils will have a class Mass in the Spring or Summer term. Well done to all of our young people who have been raising money for our various charities including Mary's Meals and our School Food Bank (St Greg's Pantry) along with donations of presents for the Catholic Children's Society.

I would like to take this opportunity to say good luck and thank you to Mr Moore and Mr Twyford who are leaving the school at the end of this term. I wish them the best for their new roles.

Finally, I wish you all a restful and blessed Christmas, I hope that you will all be able to attend Church as a family to celebrate the feast of Christmas.

Madeleine Moran
Headteacher



Mrs Moran with some of the pupils receiving Headteacher Awards this term

A Huge St Gregory's Welcome to Fr Brendan

At the beginning of this term, we were delighted to welcome our new chaplain, Fr Brendan to our team. He has been such a great addition to our school community, with multiple Masses taking place in our chapel each week along with weekly morning prayer opportunities for members of staff and students. In this season of Advent, it has been fantastic to see so many students visiting the chapel during their lunch times to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation to help them prepare for Christmas. Thank you, Fr Brendan, and we hope you have enjoyed your first term with us.

Mr Finnegan, Deputy Headteacher

Trip to Auschwitz

On Tuesday, 8th October 2024, I was chosen, along with another sixth former, to represent our school on a trip to Auschwitz-Birkenau. When I applied, I thought I understood what to expect, but I quickly realised I couldn't anticipate the depth of emotions I would experience. Growing up, I had walked past graveyards without fully reflecting on the lives lost, but visiting Auschwitz changed that. It made me realise that the victims were real people, not just statistics in textbooks. Their deaths were humanised in a way I hadn't grasped before.

The trip helped me understand the gravity of the Holocaust and inspired me to fight against anti-Semitism today. It ensured the memories of those lost are not forgotten, and I am grateful to have contributed to that. Upon returning home, I reflected on what I had seen, especially the mountains of shoes—each one belonging to someone who had walked into that horror. I felt grief for people I never met, but who were once just normal individuals thrown into unimaginable suffering.

The project impacted me deeply, immersing me in the reality of the Holocaust. It allowed me to feel, not just learn, and that connection makes me more determined to be politically active and raise awareness about important issues, both past and present. Lastly, the trip brought people together, each of us connected through history, fostering a community of learning and reflection.

Ria Hartland, Year 12



Recycled Crafts Club



The Recycled Crafts Club have been busy creating Christmas decorations out of recycled and repurposed materials, which will be sold at the Christmas Concert on 19th December to raise money for St. Greg's Pantry. They have made a selection of baubles and stars to adorn your Christmas trees. I am thoroughly enjoying working with the students who bring so much energy, creativity and fun to every session, even if some of their musical tastes are questionable!

Recycled Crafts Club meets on Thursdays Week A in A8, for anyone who loves to craft.

Mrs Haines, Art

Advent Giving

On 19th December pupils and staff were encouraged to wear a Christmas jumper to school in return for a £1 donation to St Greg's Pantry. In addition, staff have donated and delivered 29 Christmas food hampers to a number of St Gregory's families. We would like to thank:

St. Luke's Parish, Pinner which gifted 15 Christmas food hampers.

Horoehoe Construction Ltd who donated £900 worth of shopping vouchers to St Gregory's families.

Caritas Westminster which sent us £600 of food shopping vouchers for families who use St Greg's Pantry to help them over the Christmas holidays, when the Pantry will be closed.

PMT Print who printed Christmas cards free of charge, designed by pupils for sale at the Christmas concert to raise funds for St. Greg's pantry.

O'Kane's Irish Foods who supplied the refreshments for our Christmas concert and who donate food to St Greg's Pantry throughout the year.



Mrs Hovey, Science College Project Manager

As has become an annual tradition, the RE department and the Year 7 team recently co-ordinated the collection for the Catholic Children's Society Advent Appeal. All pupils in Year 7 were asked to bring in just one gift, such as footballs, stationery and dolls. These presents were then collected by the Catholic Children's Society to be distributed to children in our diocese who are carers, refugees or in social care and who might not otherwise get a present at Christmas. It is a wonderful cause and, once again our Year 7 pupils were exceptionally generous in their giving and have done us proud. This year we have ended up donating the biggest collection we have ever had!



Our sincerest thanks to all of our Year 7 students and parents for their generosity. It really does make a difference to the lives of some of the most in-need children in our diocese.

Have a wonderful Christmas,
Mrs Briody, Miss McGrath, R.E. department



Years 8 to 13 have used the Caritas Advent Calendar to create food parcels in support of our St Greg's Pantry. Each angel on the advent calendar shows one item which a pupil then brings in to school as their contribution. We had a fantastic response from all pupils and we would like to thank our whole school community for their help as well as a big thank you to all of the 6th form prefects, Mr Bynoth and Mrs Hovey's 6th Form Eco Group for their support collecting and sorting all the donations.

Mrs Briody and Mrs Cooney, R.E. department

Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge Workshop

The Year 10 Speak Out challenge workshop took place on 18th October. Students spent the day developing their public speaking skills and chose a topic to speak on for three minutes. All students did a magnificent job in Speaking Out and deserve much credit. Topics covered were wide-ranging from the use of AI, video games and racism. One student will represent the school at the Brent regional final in January.



Mrs Woodhouse, Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator

Prize Night

It was wonderful to host Prize Night again at the Kadwa Patidar Centre in Harrow on Thursday 21st November. Throughout the evening we enjoyed high quality musical performances from Agustin Sasikumar (piano), our Guitar Ensemble and St Gregory's Alumni, Nathanael Agyemang (piano).

Our Guest of Honour was Bishop John Sherrington, Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster. Bishop John presented our pupils with their trophies, GCSE, A level and CTEC certificates before an audience of almost 500 people including parents, staff, governors and special guests of the school.



Bishop John also gave an inspirational speech, which was appreciated by everyone present.

This was a wonderful evening and a fitting tribute to our students for all of their hard work.

Miss Woulfe, Assistant Headteacher



Philosophy

On the 28th November our Philosophy and Ethics A Level students were given the opportunity to take part in an A Level masterclass hosted by Bloomsbury Baptist Church. The students got the opportunity to hear lectures from many prestigious British philosophers and university lecturers from a number of the top universities, including Oxford. The day gave the Year 13 students an opportunity to take part in university-style lectures such as those they will be experiencing themselves from next year, whilst consolidating their knowledge of topics they are studying for their own A Level Philosophy & Ethics exams this year.



Mrs Briody, Head of R.E.

Black History Month



In Sociology we studied the life of Jayaben Desai - a true local hero, who was a prominent ethnic minority female here in Brent, known for her activism in the 1970s. Born in India, she moved to the UK and became a key player in the struggle for workers' rights, particularly in the context of the Grunwick dispute, where she led a strike for better pay and conditions for workers, many of whom were women from her community. Her determination and leadership during the Grunwick strike highlighted issues of racial and social injustice, a theme which runs throughout our study of Sociology at A level, as well as uniting diverse groups in solidarity. Desai's activism not only changed labour practices but also empowered marginalised communities, making her a celebrated figure in Brent and beyond. Her legacy continues to inspire movements for equality and workers' rights.



Mrs Cooney, Sociology

The theme for Black History Month this year was “Reclaiming Narratives,” and marks a significant shift towards recognising and correcting the narratives of Black history and culture. At St Gregory’s we decided to use this theme to reclaim the narratives of a local Brent hero in lessons across the curriculum. It was fantastic to see so many departments get involved, from Maths and PE discussing our local Brent hero footballers Raheem Sterling and St Gregory’s alumni Luke Mbete, as well as the boxer Audley Harrison, to the French department’s focus on Cyril Regis and the Business and Economics department’s discussion around the impact of Charmaine Simpson.



Cyril Regis



Luke Mbete

Miss Doherty, History

Eco Advent Competition

Please encourage your child to take part in our Eco Advent Calendar competition. There are lots of Satchel Points up for grabs plus a prize for the best junk model or artwork made out of wrapping paper and packaging from your Christmas presents. Details of the competition should be on your child’s Form Google Classroom and were also emailed to parents.

One of the activities is to create a meal from leftover food. We are looking for new recipes for our Food Waste Recipe Book. If you have a great recipe using left over food, please share it with us, by emailing it for the attention of Mrs Hovey to schooloffice@stgregorys.harrow.sch.uk. You can see our school Food Waste Recipe book on the school website [HERE](#).

Year 9 Eco Committee

Physics

On the 5th November a group of Year 11 students attended a lecture at the new Science Lecture Theatre at Harrow School. Professor Chris White from Queen Mary University London delivered a lecture entitled "What can protons tell us about black holes?" He covered a range of physics content from the universe to subatomic particles, gluon calculations and rocket science. Furthermore we were introduced to many theories over a short amount of time such as the string theory. Overall, I found this lecture very educational and purposeful and it gave me an insight on what post-16 education can look like.

Julia Bachulska Year 11



Diocese Christmas Card Competition

As part of a collaborative Art and RE initiative, students had the chance to participate in the Diocese Christmas card competition. They were asked to create an A4 coloured artwork based on the theme "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them" (Luke 2:8-15) Many entries were submitted, from which the Art and RE Departments selected the finalists and one overall winner, Nela Kubinska 7L. Her design was sent to the Diocese competition. Congratulations to everyone who participated.

Right: Winning entry by Nela Kubinska

Bottom right: entry by Mercy Gomes

Bottom left: Nela receiving her Headteachers Award



Art & R.E. Departments



Science Club

Students demonstrated 'water walking' with vivid colours. The capillary action caused by cohesive forces between water molecules and the stronger adhesive forces between the paper and water molecules, made water travel from one coloured solution to the next. The dissolved coloured solutes diffused with the water from one solution to the next. These colourful experiments exemplified how water travels in plants.

Students also made iconic lava lamps using cooking oil, tap water, food dyes and sodium hydrogen carbonate to make the colours rise, float and sink. Spectacular and mesmerising bubbles could be seen in the boiling tubes.



Dr Rathod, Science

BBC Bitesize Event



Navin Chowdhry, Kellie Bright and Fee Mak with some pupils

employment that I didn't know about. Afterwards, we were allowed to ask them questions with a microphone rugby ball and I really enjoyed this because it was a fun way for us to be involved in the assembly. Overall, I really enjoyed the interview because it was a unique and informative experience.

Thenuri Costa Year 9

For the BBC Careers Event, two actors from the show EastEnders, a BBC soap, came to our school to speak to all the children about their careers and how they became actors. These two actors were asked questions about their careers which gave us an insight into their daily



Kellie Bright (Linda Carter in Eastenders)

routine and what it entails. Throughout the interview we heard about different aspects of their field of work and considered whether we wanted to pursue this industry. They also gave us an insight into how their careers affected their personal lives, which was very interesting. Nearing the end of the interview we had the chance to ask questions ourselves and gained knowledge in areas such as self-employment and taxes. I enjoyed the event because it was good for us to hear from people with experience so we could start to think about our future.

George Coelho Year 8

Key Stage 5 Maths: Shining Stars and Stellar Achievements!

This term has been an extraordinary one for our Key Stage 5 Maths students, who have demonstrated brilliance, dedication, and a true passion for mathematics in a variety of esteemed competitions.

UKMT Senior Maths Challenge – A Proud Moment

We were delighted to enter 70 students into the prestigious UKMT Senior Maths Challenge, a testament to their mathematical enthusiasm and ability. Out of these talented individuals, 14 students achieved Bronze awards, and an impressive 5 earned Silver. Special congratulations go to Nathan Berhane (Year 13), who was named Best in School, and Shewan De Silva (Year 12), who achieved Best in Year. Bravo to all who participated!

Ritangle Team Challenge – Collaboration in Action

Inspired by their success and love for problem solving, a group of students have now come together to form a team for the Ritangle Team Challenge, a national competition that celebrates teamwork and mathematical ingenuity. Our talented students were mentioned on the Ritangle website as one of the 592 teams, out of over 1,700 submissions, to successfully unlock Stage 3. Furthermore, they were recognised as one of the teams that managed to solve at least two of the challenging Stage 3 cross number puzzles.



Here are the words of some of our talented students:

The competition was both highly challenging and immensely enjoyable, providing us with the opportunity to push the boundaries of our mathematical abilities while collaborating as a team to solve complex problems. It was a chance to compete against other Sixth Form colleges and truly test our skills and resilience.

Matei Vasilache - Year 12

Participating in the Ritangle challenge taught me the power of combining individual strengths and diverse perspectives to develop innovative problem-solving strategies. Collaborating as a team highlighted the crucial role of clear communication and effective teamwork in addressing complex challenges efficiently.

Cloyster Braganca -Year 12

Exceptional Achievements in Olympiad for Girls



Four of our talented female mathematicians took part in the Olympiad for Girls, an eminent competition designed to inspire and challenge young women in mathematics. We are thrilled to announce that Mary Fergusson earned a Merit, while Louvina Aranos not only received a Merit but was also named Best in School, a remarkable achievement indeed!

Well done to all our incredible students - you continue to inspire and amaze us with your accomplishments. Keep aiming high, and let's see what mathematical wonders await in the coming months!

Ms Muktari, Maths



Headteacher's Awards



Congratulations to the following pupils who received a Headteacher's Award from Mrs Moran this term. They are to be commended for their outstanding achievements.

Bronze - UKMT Senior Maths Challenge

Louvina Aranos	6WOC
Sean Bibbo	6HAK
Flannery Braganca	6WOC
Thinuth Christostom	6MUH
Mary Ferguson	6MUH
Mehara Fernando	6WOC
Mateusz Kazrat	6HUA
Daniel Kind	6MUH
Leo McBride	6WOC
Luiz Moraes-Neto	6HAK
Timothy Pudlo	6WOC
Maja Skomra	6HUA
Matei Vasilache	6WOC
Aaliyah Walsh	6WOC

Silver- UKMT Senior Maths Challenge

Nathan Berhane	6HIA
Shewan De Silva	6HUA
Paulus Kulanthai	6HIA
Denys Semenchuk	6HIA

MEI Ritangle Commendable Team

Reuben Araujo	6MUH
Cloyster Braganca	6WOC
Selvino Cardozo	6HUA
Shewan De Silva	6HUA
Calvyn Dias	6WOC
Mateusz Kazrat	6HUA
Thomas Larkin	6MUH
Matei Vasilache	6WOC
Cleavon Vicente	6WOC

Merit - UKMT Mathematical Olympiad for Girls

Louvina Aranos	6WOC
Mary Ferguson	6MUH

Performance at Prize Night

Agustin Sasikumar	9J
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Achievement in Science

Sofia Wrobel	11H
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Eco Committee—Green Flag Award, running the uniform shop and raising money for the pantry

Arsema Zerai	10J
Ednah Correia	10H
Jakub Buda	10M
Jerel D'Sa	10A
Leo Gill	10H
Leona Noronha	10L
Lilly Mae Hurley	10B
Patrick Masterson	10A
Pedro Mendes	10B
Ryan Perera	10M
Twyla Mendes	10J

Christmas Card Competition

David Burghelea	7H
Princeo Colimao	7L
Olesia Fernandes	8J
Mercy Gomes	7L
Nela Kubinska	7L
Nolan Lobo	8M
Adrien Pigault	7H
Eli Ryan	7H
Maria Schirod	7J

Highest Satchel Points

Dillon Beisty	7J
Maya Butnaru	7J
Daniel Cirsis	8A
Lance De Souza	8H
Thomas Galik	7J
Rosemary Ipogah	7J
Nicola Keville	8A
Phelim Lennon	8A
Janessa Polecina	7J
Archie Venting	7A

Pianist at Mass

Cedric Edwin	7L
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Hard Work Pays Off

This half term, our Headteacher, Mrs Moran, congratulated a group of our highest achieving Year 11 students on the strong progress they have made this term.

Mrs Moran expressed how proud she was of their achievements and looked forward to receiving their Sixth Form applications to continue their studies at St Gregory's next year. Well done on a fantastic start to Year 11!

Mr Finnegan, Deputy Headteacher



St Gregory's Catholic Science College

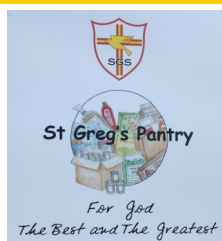
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For God, the best and the greatest



We stock a large variety of long life foods and toiletries as well as a selection of fresh fruit/veg, cheese and sliced meats. The Pantry is open during term time on Saturdays from 9:30am—11:30am. Any family is welcome to use this facility, free of charge, occasionally or regularly.

To organise a visit, email:
ghovey@stgregorys.harrow.sch.uk

Travelling to School

WE HAVE ACHIEVED



On 4th December the Year 8 Travel Ambassadors undertook a Citizen Science investigation to examine levels of air pollution around our school. We split into three different groups. One group measured

particulate matter on hard surfaces, another group measured tar spots on sycamore leaves and the third group investigated the different types of lichens growing on trees. We took measurements from three different locations around the school, including the park. We learnt that different types of lichen react differently to Nitrogen Dioxide – a pollutant found commonly in the air around roads. Some lichens thrive in polluted air, whilst others won't grow there. We found lots of Nitrogen-loving lichens on trees near the roads and far fewer of these lichens in the parks.

After this investigation, we realised how polluted the air is near busy roads and that we really need to make a difference. This investigation inspired us to advocate for cleaner air and to act to protect the environment and the well-being and health of humans (us!).

Thank you to all the parents who took part in our travel survey, which showed a large number of people are still travelling to school by car. Your responses will help us plan our activities this academic year. We encourage everyone to consider how they travel to school. If you HAVE to travel to school by car, please park a 10-minute walk away from school and allow your child to walk the rest of the way.

Blanka Adaszek, Cliona McDonnell, Faustin D'sa (Year 8 Travel Ambassadors)



No Nuts Please

We have several children in school who suffer from a severe nut allergy. Please could I take this opportunity to remind you that our school has a “No Nuts Policy”. *Mrs Camangon, Medical Welfare Officer*

What are social media scams?



With online scams on the rise worldwide, particularly at this time of year, it is important we are all aware of what scams are; the common types of scams and helpful tips. Internet Matters has a great information page for parents with lots of useful information. You can find all the information [HERE](#)

If you have any e-safety concerns please contact the school's E-Safety Officer, *Miss McCarthy*

Upcycled Uniform Shop

Has your child grown out of their uniform? As well as donating items of uniform, which are clean and in good condition, please remember you may also purchase uniform from the shop at heavily discounted prices. We have a good selection of larger uniform sizes available. If you would like to purchase uniform from the Upcycled Uniform Shop, please contact Mrs Kelly via the School Office. Save money and save the planet—buy pre-loved clothing.